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September 8, 2023

Dear Brandeis University Faculty and Staff:

Brandeis is committed to offering a comprehensive and affordable array of benefit programs for our faculty and staff. This is an essential part of our ability to attract, retain and develop our employees and a continue our commitment to provide programs that support employees and their families. While our existing benefit programs do include measures to help manage costs, it's no secret that health care costs continue to escalate. Like you, we are concerned about the impact that health care coverage has on our budgets. Our goal is to help you and your family achieve and maintain good health and provide affordable health care plans.

Fortunately, good health can actually cost less if we take greater control through healthy life styles and smart health care decisions. A common trend among many employers, including colleges and universities, is to offer consumer-directed health care plans. With this in mind, Brandeis University will offer a consumer driven [High Deductible Health Plan \(HDHP\)](#) for the 2024 plan year, starting January 1st. The HDHP will be offered as a new option in addition to the existing medical plans.

Simply put, the HDHP will allow employees to be more active in decisions regarding their health care with lower employee premium rates and a higher deductible before coverage starts. Enrolling in the HDHP will also allow you to open a [Health Savings Account \(HSA\)](#), where you contribute pre-tax dollars to offset your out of pocket costs. As an additional benefit, the University will also contribute to the HSAs for employees who enroll in the HDHP.

Although your portion of medical expenses may be higher than what you've paid in the past, those expenses will be offset by:

- Lower paycheck deductions for your portion of the health plan premiums,
- Tax savings when contributing to an HSA, offered through Fidelity, that can be used for all qualified expenses – including medical, dental, vision, and pharmacy, and



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- The ability to use your HSA as a tax-free complement to your retirement planning.

Because the HDHP is structured very differently than our other medical options, it will be important for you to understand the plan in detail before enrolling. This is an initial and high-level summary of the HDHP and HSA. Starting soon, and through the open enrollment period (October 30th through November 10th) you will be hearing much more about the new plan offering via InBrief and informational sessions. We encourage everyone to read the information and attend the meetings to get more information and all of your questions answered.

Please contact [Human Resources](#) if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Robin

Robin Switzer

Vice President, Human Resources